

APR 15 1958

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP75-000

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# Frank Kent Sr., Newsman, Dies

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Staff Reporter



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Frank Richardson Kent Sr., 80, veteran Sunpapers editor and reporter, whose columns, magazine articles and books made him one of the Nation's prominent political writers, died yesterday at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Death was attributed to complications arising from a kidney ailment.

The oldest member of the Baltimore Sunpapers editorial staff, both in years and in service, Mr. Kent continued to come to his office almost every day, even after he became ill some time ago.

Though troubled by arthritis, Mr. Kent wrote his articles in longhand throughout his career. He had used a typewriter, but preferred the old-fashioned method. His last column appeared in the Baltimore Sun on Jan. 5.

## Wrote Syndicated Column

Only once before his last illness did his column on "The Great Game of Politics," syndicated in 100 papers, fail to appear. This was during a brief illness in 1957. Even during vacations he continued to send in his subtle and mordant political comment.

His daily column, "Sketched and Scorched," earned him Nation-wide praise and insults, occasionally from the same person.

Sen. J. Thomas Heflin (D-Ala.) often felt Mr. Kent's verbal brickbats descending on him in the 1920s, but in 1931, when the columnist denounced Democratic mogul John J. Raskob, Sen. Heflin described Mr. Kent as "my dear friend and admirer."

From Arthur Krock, former chief of the New York Times Washington bureau, came another sort of appreciation.

When Mr. Kent decided, in 1947, to curtail his activities and turn in fewer columns, Krock wrote:

"This is a loss to his large reading public that no other journalist can repair. He has the high degree of courage and integrity which newspaper readers have a right to expect, and he always practiced journalism as the trade of a gentleman."

Associated Press

## FRANK R. KENT SR. From Newspaper Family

Physically slight and elegantly habited, Mr. Kent had a charm of appearance and manner which belied his reputation as a man whom it would be dangerous to fall afoul of. His integrity was as absolute as his ability to penetrate cant. He came naturally into newspaper work. His maternal grandfather, Beale Howard Richardson, was publisher of two Baltimore newspapers. His father's father, Emanuel Kent, was one of the incorporators of the city of Baltimore.

Mr. Kent came to the Baltimore Sun in 1900, after working as a reporter on two other papers.

In 1910 he helped establish the Evening Sun and became managing editor of both papers. He also served several years as vice president of A. S. Abell Co., publishers of the Sunpapers.

His keen wit and diverse talents won him recognition from Phi Beta Kappa, an honorary master's degree from the University of Maryland and a doctorate of literature from Oglethorpe University.

He was the author of "The Story of Maryland Politics," "The Great Game of Politics," "History of the Democratic Party," "Political Behavior," "Without Gloves" and "The Story of Alexander Brown & Sons."

He was a member of the National Press Club and the Metropolitan Club in Washington and served on the advisory board of Columbia University's Pulitzer School of Journalism. In 1921 he became the Sunpapers' first London correspondent.

White House Press Secretary James C. Hagerty told reporters in a press conference yesterday that "The President has asked me to express on his behalf his sadness at the news of the passing of Frank R. Kent."

He was one of the President's favorite columnists, Mr. Hagerty said. The Secretary also expressed his personal grief at the news, saying Mr. Kent was "a fine newspaperman."

His first wife, Minnie Whitman, died four years after their marriage. Six years later he married Elizabeth Thomas, who survives him.

Also surviving are a son by his first marriage, Frank R. Kent Jr., of 2921 Cathedral Ave. N.W., a former Washington Post reporter currently with the Central Intelligence Agency; a sister, Mrs. G. Warfield Hobbs, of Anne Arundel County, Md. and two grandchildren.